



U.S. Department of Justice

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PRESS RELEASE

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Local Drug Dealer Sentenced to 13 Years in Prison For Assault Over \$100 Drug Debt

WASHINGTON - Henry Wilson, 57, of Washington, D.C., has been sentenced to a 13-year prison term for an aggravated assault and related crimes that occurred over a \$100 drug debt, United States Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced.

Wilson was sentenced by the Honorable Judge Anthony C. Epstein on January 21, 2011 in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia on charges of first degree burglary while armed, assault with intent to kill while armed, aggravated assault while armed, assault with a dangerous weapon, and assault with significant bodily injury. He pled guilty to those charges in August 2010, on the day that his trial was scheduled to begin.

According to the government's evidence, at about 9:30 p.m. on October 7, 2009, Wilson and an unidentified co-conspirator went to a vacant apartment building in the unit block of 50th Street NE, where the victim had been staying. A few weeks prior to the incident, the victim, a heroin addict at the time, agreed to sell \$100 worth of heroin for Wilson, a heroin dealer. However, the victim did not pay Wilson back the \$100 drug debt.

That night, the victim heard a knock on the door. When he stepped outside, the victim saw Wilson holding an aluminum baseball bat. Wilson stated, "Now I got you where I want you." Wilson and the unidentified co-conspirator entered the apartment, where Wilson struck the victim repeatedly on the head, knees and hip with the bat. Although the victim promised he would "pay the money" and screamed for help, Wilson continued the brutal attack.

Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) Officers James Phillips and Jason Newman were parked nearby and heard the screams. They flashed their spotlight toward the building, at which point Wilson and the unidentified man fled. Emergency medical personnel took the victim to a nearby hospital. Despite his fear, the victim came forward and identified Wilson as his assailant. Due in part to the hip injury he suffered at the hands of Wilson, the victim – who is now in recovery from a 20-year heroin addiction – moves with the assistance of a walker or wheelchair.

In preparing for trial, the government discovered a series of jail calls made by Wilson in which he discussed the assault. In these calls, it was clear that Wilson felt justified in beating the victim over a \$100 drug debt, and did not believe that the victim would testify at trial.

In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Machen praised the outstanding work of the MPD officers who investigated the case, including Officers Phillips and Newman, and Detective Eric Roche. Additionally, he praised the work of Paralegal Antoinette Sakamsa, who helped obtain the jail calls that contained crucial evidence against Wilson. Finally, U.S. Attorney Machen praised the work of Assistant U.S. Attorneys J.P. Cooney, who investigated and indicted the case, and Melinda A. Williams, who prepared the case for trial.

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